

This morning I honored International Woman's Day by speaking to a parliamentary delegation of Afghan and Iraqi women. Their struggle to gain equality and independence follows a similar path to American women's plight for the freedom in the early 20<sup>th</sup>

Century.

Middle Eastern women currently have momentum: achieving political office, personal

freedoms and a public voice. Advances in Iraq and Afghanistan illustrate how repressive states can reverse trends and move towards a more just society.